

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS BELFAST 131

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, UK, EI
SUBJECT: PROTEST AT PORTADOWN

REF: BELFAST 130

1. REVEREND IAN PAISLEY AND ERNEST BAIRD LED PEACEFUL
DEMONSTRATION OUTSIDE MAGISTRATE'S COURT IN TOWN PORTADOWN
APRIL 19 PROTESTING COURT ACTION AGAINST FIVE MEMBERS ULSTER
SERVICE CORPS (USC) FOR OPERATING UNOFFICIAL ROAD BLOCK IN
COUNTY ARMAGH LAST SEPTEMBER. CASE WAS ADJOURNED AND WILL
BE HEARD MAY 5 IN ARMAGH.

2. ESTIMATES OF SIZE OF CROWD VARY BETWEEN ONE AND FOUR
THOUSAND. IN AXRTION# TO BAIRD AND PAISLEY, HEARING WAS
ATTENDED BY MP JOHN DUNLOP, ULSTER DEFENSE ASSOCIATION LEADER
ANDY TYRIE, CHAIRMAN DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY REVEREND
WILLIAM MC CREA AND ULSTER WORKER'S COUNCIL (UWC) LEADER
JIM SMYTH. ADDRESSING CROWD, BOTH PAISLEY AND BAIRD CLAIMED
TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN USC PATROLS AND BAIRD SAID HE SHOULD BE
IN DOCK. SPEAKING OVER LOUDHAILER PAISLEY, BAIRD AND MC CREA
PERSUED THEME THAT DEMONSTRATION WAS "FIRST STEP" TO EXTERMINATION
IRA, RETURN OF SECURITY TO HANDS OF ULSTERMEN AND RESTORATION
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STORMONT. MOST SHOPS IN DOWNTOWN PORTADOWN CLOSED DURING
DEMONSTRATION. ONE THOUSAND CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AT KILROOT
ELECTRICAL FACILITY COUNTY ANTRIM AND 500 WORKERS AT GENERAL
ELECTRIC LARNE WALKED OUT IN SYMPATHY.

3. 3. SPOKESMAN FOR SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP),
UNIONIST PARTY NORTHERN IRELAND, AND ALLIANCE PARTY CRITICIZED

PATROLS AND PAISLEY FOR BULLYING AND INTIMIDATION. BELFAST
IRISH NEWS (CATHOLIC READERSHIP) CALLED FOR ASSURANCE BY SECRETARY
OF STATE MASON THAT GOVERNMENT IS FULLY EQUIPPED TO COUNTER
ANY ATTEMPTS TO ACT AGAINST THE COMMUNITY.

4. IMPORTANCE OF ERNEST BAIRD SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED
IN THIS SITUATION. HE LAUNCHED 1974 UWC STRIKE WITH HANDFUL
OF WORKERS AT BALLYLUMFORD POWER STATION AND DETERMINATION OF
RURAL AND SMALL-TOWN LOYALISTS WAS DEMONSTRATED NIGHT APRIL
19 AND 20 WHEN USC PATROLS AGAIN OPERATED IN COUNTIES TYRONE
AND ARMAGH. PORTADOWN EVENTS DOMINATING NEWS ALL LOCAL MEDIA
AND PROCEEDINGS AT STRASBOURG IN TORTURE CASE BEING LARGELY
IGNORED.SPICER

NOTE BY OC/T: #AS RECEIVED.

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